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# ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

APRIL, 1843.

## DIFFERENT WAYS OF ARRIVING AT PEACE CONCLUSIONS.

The friends of peace aim at a single object common to them all, the abolition of war—not what any one may choose to call war; but the well-known, immemorial custom of nations or states settling their difficulties by violence and bloodshed. This is the evil, the only evil, against which we are united; and the whole design of our associated efforts will be accomplished by the entire extinction of this custom.

Here is the conclusion in which all the friends of peace meet; but it is obviously possible for them to reach it in a variety of ways. They come to the same result, but each by arguments more or less peculiar. One set of peace-men, believing in the strict inviolability of human life, condemn *all* war, because it is a wholesale and terrible violation of this comprehensive principle, which obliges them also to discard capital punishment, and all such use of force in supporting government, and suppressing mobs and other popular tumults, as shall take, or intentionally endanger life.—Other strong friends of peace, who believe, with the former, all war to be unchristian, reach this conclusion, not as an inference from the inviolability of human life, but as the result of more general arguments from the gospel.—Still another class of moderate peace-men, the most numerous, and at present the most influential with the multitude, sincerely desire to see the whole war-system abolished, but deem it right even for Christians to fight in strict self-defence. The two former classes are influenced mainly by the scriptural or moral arguments against war; while the latter look chiefly at its waste of property, its havoc of human life, and the endless train of evils which serve to illustrate its inexpediency.

Now, the cause of peace is responsible, not for the logic of its friends, but only for the conclusion in which they all unite. They are combined for the abolition of war; and he is a friend of peace who labors with them for this common object. We may not feel the force of his arguments, nor be willing to endorse the premises from which he reasons to the same conclusion with ourselves; but, if he meets us there, we welcome him as our co-worker, and cheerfully allow him to use such arguments as are most convincing to himself, and to other minds of a similar cast.

Nor is the cause of peace peculiar in this respect. The friends of temperance manage theirs in the same way, and permit each other, without rebuke or displeasure, to persuade themselves, by whatever arguments they please, into abstinence from all that can intoxicate. Such abstinence is

their sole aim; in this they are all united; and for this alone is the society responsible. One may argue as a Unitarian, another as an Orthodox man; one as a Protestant, another as a Papist; one as a Christian, another as an infidel. The society is concerned not with their logic, but mainly with the conclusion of total abstinence to which all alike come; and when there, every man, however unsound or frivolous his arguments may appear to his associates, is regarded as a good temperance man.

Now, we claim the same indulgence for the friends of peace. They are aboring solely for the abolition of war, national war; in this object they all unite; and for this alone is the peace society responsible. Its members, like those of the temperance society, may reason differently; and men often reach right conclusions by wrong or weak arguments; but for their logic, whether sound or unsound, only the individuals who use it, should be held to any account.

In this respect the cause of peace has been unfairly treated. If any of its friends argue from premises too high or too low, too broad or too narrow, forthwith the society itself has been reproached by all that disliked such logic. We would not endorse any wrong or feeble arguments; but we let every one reach the conclusion of abstinence from war by such considerations as have the most influence over his own mind, and merely ask not to be held responsible ourselves for his logic. We *are* responsible for the result to which he comes in common with ourselves, but not for the way in which he reaches it.

Some of our friends, arguing to our conclusion from the strict inviolability of human life, are met with the objection, that such a doctrine subverts or neutralizes civil government; and we deem it an act of simple justice to let them, as we do in the following article, show how law can be enforced, and government maintained, without the sacrifice of human life. The argument will speak for itself; and even those who are not convinced, must acknowledge the writer's ability and candor.

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#### INVIOABILITY OF HUMAN LIFE CONSISTENT WITH CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

It is worthy of notice among the signs of the times, that there appears to be a widely extending disposition, both in this country and in Europe, to adopt the doctrine of the inviolability of human life. The general adoption of this doctrine would obviously produce, in its results, important modifications in the condition of civil society. This doctrine is not one of the doctrines of the American Peace Society; and yet it is supposed to be the case, that many of the decided friends of peace are favorable to it. In consequence of its indirect but close connection with the subject of peace, it may not be improper to say something upon it in the *Advocate of Peace*. It is not our intention, however, in what follows, to enter into a direct defence of the doctrine; but briefly to say something in answer to the question, which is often put, viz: How can law be enforced, and civil society sustained, consistently with the doctrine of the inviolability of human life?

In answering this inquiry, I would remark, that those who hold to the doctrine of the inviolability of human life, are not to be confounded with the strict non-resistants. The latter are understood to reject punishment altogether, in all its forms and degrees. The former, considered as a distinct moral sect or party, hold to the right and propriety of inflicting any